REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 16, 27-29, 42 and 53-55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Saint Etiennne et al. in view of Linville et al. Applicant has amended the claims to more particularly define the present invention over the cited prior art.

More specifically, claim 1 as amended recites, *inter alia*,

> … receiving PDUs (protocol data units) from multiple streams at a first MAC (media access control) client;
>
> … providing a plurality of buffers uniquely associated with the multiple streams supplying PDUs to the first MAC client;
>
> for each given PDU decapsulated from the MAC frames received at the second MAC client, forwarding the given PDU to a select one of said plurality of buffers that is associated with the stream from which the given PDU originated in accordance with the identifier of the MAC frame from which the given PDU was decapsulated;
>
> monitoring a fullness condition of each one of said plurality of buffers; and
>
> transmitting a Pause control frame from the second MAC client to the first MAC client, the Pause control frame indicating the fullness condition of each one of said plurality of buffers.

Nowhere does the cited prior art teach or suggest these features.

Linville et al. is concerned with a network having ports each having a buffer pool and a mechanism for generating and sending a Pause control frame indicating congestion of the buffer pool for the given port for communication to other ports that send traffic to the given port. See Column 9, lines 15-25. In contrast, the present invention is concerned with a "link" supporting communication from a first MAC client to a second MAC client where many different data streams are supplied to the first MAC client and

multiplexed over the link. The second MAC client employs a plurality of buffers uniquely associated with the multiple streams. The buffers store data from the corresponding streams. The second MAC client monitors a fullness condition of each one of the plurality of buffers, and transmits a Pause control frame from the second MAC client to the first MAC client. The Pause control frame indicates the fullness condition of each one of the plurality of buffers. **Importantly, the Pause Control Frame of the present invention carries information indicating congestion (i.e., buffer full condition) for a plurality of buffers uniquely associated with the multiple streams that supply data to the first MAC client.** These features are not taught by Linville et al where the Pause control frame carries information indicating congestion of the buffer pool for the generating port. These features advantageously provide for fine-grain flow control for the distinct data streams supplied to the first MAC client. These advantages are not contemplated by the system of Linville et al.

For these reasons, claim 1 is clearly patentable over the cited prior art. Similar arguments apply to independent claims 16, 27 and 42.

The dependent claims are patentable over the cited prior art for those reasons advanced above with respect to claims 1, 16, 27 and 42 from which they respectively depend and for reciting additional features that are not taught or suggested by the cited prior art.

Claims 53-55 have been cancelled. New dependent claims 56-58 have been added. These new claims recite features that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited prior art.

In light of all of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in order for allowance, and prompt allowance is earnestly requested. Should any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record so that the case may proceed expeditiously to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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